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# RWU/WPRI 12 Poll: R.I. Gov. Raimondo Extends Lead Over Mayor Fung

Sen. Whitehouse holds 19-point lead, 56% of RI voters support legalizing recreational marijuana



October 29, 2018 | By Edward Fitzpatrick

*Updated at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 30, with results of question about legalizing recreational marijuana.*

*Updated at 10 p.m. Monday, Oct. 29, with results for U.S. Senate race and question about Justice Brett Kavanaugh.*

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – Democratic Gov. Gina M. Raimondo’s lead over Republican challenger Allan W. Fung has grown to 11 percentage points – up from 7 points in September and 2 points in July, according to a Roger Williams University/WPRI 12 poll released on Monday, Oct. 29.

With the Nov. 6 elections just days away, the latest poll found Raimondo with 45 percent of the vote, Cranston Mayor Fung with 34 percent and Republican-turned-independent candidate Joseph A. Trillo with 9 percent.

Nearly 8 percent of voters remain undecided, while 2 percent support Compassion Party candidate Anne Armstrong, 2 percent support Moderate Party candidate William Gilbert, and 0.5 percent support independent candidate Dr. Luis-Daniel Muñoz, the poll found.

The Fleming & Associates polling firm conducted the survey of 416 likely Rhode Island voters Oct. 20-24. The survey has an overall margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4.8 percentage points.

“The governor is in a good position at this point in time,” veteran pollster Joseph Fleming said. “We have seen upsets in the past, but if I’m the governor, I’m happy with my position.”

Fleming noted that Fung’s support has remained between 34 percent and 37 percent over the course of four RWU/WPRI 12 polls this year. “He hasn’t moved any voters,” he said.

By contrast, Raimondo’s support has grown from 38 percent in February to 45 percent in the most recent poll. “Spending \$5 million to \$7 million can do that for you,” Fleming said. “Also, she received a good bump from her strong showing in the Democratic primary, which demonstrated she was not as weak as some had thought.”

Raimondo has extended her lead over Fung by 4 percentage points since the last RWU/WPRI 12 poll, Fleming noted. “She has outspent him on paid media,” he said. “And she has driven up his negatives.”

In this most recent poll, Fung's was viewed unfavorably by 45 percent of voters – an increase of 10 percentage points from September.

Meanwhile, Raimondo holds a 15-percentage-point lead over Fung among female voters (47 percent to 32 percent). And she now has a 7-percentage-point lead among male voters (42 percent to 35 percent), whereas Fung enjoyed a 7-percentage-point lead with men in September.

Raimondo has secured 73 percent of the Democratic vote, compared to 7 percent for Fung and 7 percent for Trillo, the poll found. Fung has solidified 86 percent of the Republican vote, compared to 5 percent for Raimondo and 3 percent for Trillo.

"Trillo's support among Republicans has evaporated," Fleming said.

Fung leads among independent voters with 40 percent, compared to 33 percent for Raimondo and 13 percent for Trillo.

One sign of hope for Fung is that 36 percent of Trillo's supporters say there is a good chance of changing their minds. By contrast, 11 percent of Raimondo's supporters and 9 percent of Fung supporters say there is a good chance of changing their minds.

"If I'm Allan Fung, that's what I'm looking at," Fleming said. "He has to hope that those Trillo voters come over to him and that he does extremely well with the undecided voters. But we are down to eight days until the election, and you have to assume she will outspend him with paid media."

The poll found that 48 percent of voters have a favorable opinion of Raimondo, while 50 percent have an unfavorable opinion of her. It found 46 percent have a favorable opinion of Fung, while 45 percent have an unfavorable opinion of him. And it found 19 percent have a favorable opinion of Trillo, while 53 percent have an unfavorable opinion of him.

In the U.S. Senate race, Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse holds a 19-percentage-point lead over Republican challenger Robert Flanders (55 percent to 36 percent), the poll found. Whitehouse has more than twice as much support among female voters (60 percent to 29 percent). While he leads in all age categories, Whitehouse is strongest among voters 60 and older (62 percent to 35 percent).

As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Whitehouse played a prominent role in the confirmation hearings for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, and Flanders sharply criticized Whitehouse's performance during those hearings.

The poll found that 50 percent of Rhode Island voters oppose placing Kavanaugh on the Supreme Court, while 40 percent support placing on the high court. The partisan divide was substantial: 81 percent of Democrats opposed putting Kavanaugh on the court and 81 percent of Republicans favored putting him on the court, while 52 percent of independents backed putting him on the court and 39 percent of independents opposed it, the poll found.

Also, the poll found that 56 percent of Rhode Island voters favor legalizing recreational marijuana, while 37 percent oppose it. Voters under the age of 40 strongly support legalizing recreational marijuana (67 percent favor, 24 percent oppose). The poll found 70 percent of Democrats favor legalization, compared to 36 percent of Republicans and 51 percent of independent voters.

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